



Idaho's Citizen Commission for Reapportionment

Capitol Building
700 W. Jefferson Street
Boise, ID 83720-0054

Phone: (208) 334-4740
E-mail: redistricting@redistricting.idaho.gov
Web site: www.redistricting.idaho.gov

Sandpoint Public Meeting
June 22, 2011
Sandpoint High School
2:00 pm

Chairman Frasure called the meeting to order and asked the commissioners to introduce themselves as follows: **Commissioner George Moses** from Boise, **Commissioner Allen Andersen** from Pocatello, **Commissioner Evan Frasure** from Pocatello, **Commissioner Lorna Finman** from North Idaho, and **Commissioner Lou Esposito** from Boise. Also present from the staff were **Kristin Ford** and **Cyd Gaudet**.

Chairman Frasure then explained how the commissioners were appointed and indicated that the final plan will be filed with Secretary of State and then becomes the new reapportionment. **Commissioner Moses**, in **Commissioner Kane's** absence, then went over the legal guidelines which the commission must follow. He explained that the Idaho Constitution states that there can be between 30 to 35 legislative districts. He explained that the commission must also draw the boundaries for the two Congressional Districts in Idaho within a 1% variation. He advised that the commission must redistrict to protect the one person = one vote concept, and that the legislative districts they create must be equal within a 10% deviation. He also indicated that they must honor county lines as much as possible, and that if they do divide counties they must be combined with adjacent counties and there must be a state road connecting them. He stated that they must avoid dividing precincts as much as possible, they must create compact and contiguous districts, and they must honor communities of interest as possible. He then explained that they have 90 days to create their plan.

Chairman Frasure addressed the ability to reduce the size of legislature to between 30 and 35 districts. He explained that because of growth the new target population for each district is just below 45,000 with 35 districts. However if the number of districts is reduced to 30, the target would be 54,000 in each district. He indicated that any public comment on the number of districts would be appreciated. He also invited the public to go online to draw plans and submit them. He then discussed that some of the plans submitted have attached eastern and northern Idaho into a Congressional District and the commission would like their thoughts on this also.

First to testify was **Mr. Tom Dillin**, who is Chairman of the Legislative District 1 Republican Central Committee, although he indicated that he was representing himself. He indicated that he has been to some redistricting meetings in the area and he was involved in a bipartisan effort to come up with a redistricting proposal that was fair, lawful and for the good of our state and county. He was disappointed to report that he has received a very partisan response so far. Both Democrats and Republicans were adversarial, lacking in public spirit, and favor incumbents, particular interests or particular parties. He asked the commission to be fair and balanced and to follow the state guidelines, so we don't end up with a corrupt government. He also urged the commission to be courageous, stay the course and avoid gerrymandering and do what is right for the citizens of Idaho. He indicated that given the target range for a legislative district, and the current population, the contribution from Bonner County to District 1 must be reduced by 5 to 9,000 people. He proposed that three southern precincts in that county be moved into Legislative District 2. **Commissioner Andersen** indicated that this was a very helpful and interesting proposal and that the commission will consider this thoughtfully.

Next to testify was **Mr. Mike Keough** representing his wife, **Senator Shawn Keough**, who could not be present today. He thanked the commission, on behalf of his wife, for coming to Sandpoint. **Senator Keough's** request was that the commission consider adding all of Clark Fork, Priest River, and Oldtown back into District 1. She also requested that the rest of Bonner County remain in District 2 as it is now, and be joined with northern Kootenai County with placement of Shoshone and Benewah Counties in another district connected with either eastern Kootenai County or northern Latah County or both. She will be submitting a Maptitude file shortly. A copy of **Senator Keough's** testimony is available in the commission office.

Mr. Dennis Engelhardt was next called to testify. He indicated that he is opposed to decreasing the number of districts because this would make it impossible to represent all of the people in the district. **Commissioner Moses** indicated that there is a debate about reducing the size of government and asked him what he would say to people that indicate that all government needs to be reduced. **Mr. Engelhardt** answered that being spread too thin leads to non representation, and it is not the representative part of government that should be reduced. **Chairman Frasure** then indicated that both counties could remain complete if the number of districts was reduced to 30. He then asked **Mr. Engelhardt** his thoughts regarding the number of counties south of this area that would be needed to meet the 54,000 needed to meet the target population for 30 districts. **Mr. Engelhardt** indicated that 30 districts would be great to put both counties complete but it would not be right for the state. He also indicated that he would like to see every county be a district to get fair representation. **Commissioner Moses** then pointed out there was a time when counties were used as a baseline, however the Supreme Court found that counties are not sovereign entities and therefore county representation violates the one person=one vote mandate.

Next to testify was **Mr. Byron Lewis** from Clark Fork. He indicated that he would like his area returned to District 1 so that he could go to the same polling place as his neighbor across the road. He also indicated that he felt the 10% deviation should be used in urban areas and not in rural areas as that number may be an entire community. He indicated that he would be submitting written testimony. Commissioner Frasure indicated that under the new guidelines requiring a connecting road, his current situation could not happen without a 5/6 vote of the commission.

Ms. Betty Kinne next addressed the commission on behalf of the Bonner County Farm Bureau as their Legislative Chairman. **Ms. Kinne** stated that the Farm Bureau would like to see all of the statistical information regarding the population of District 2, and to have a copy of the map it is finished. She stated that they need representation that understands their agricultural and timber issues. She indicated that they feel that the southern part of Idaho is running the state as she noticed that the map which the commission brought has all of the population in the other parts of the state and not theirs. Chairman Frasure indicated that the commission had just completed hearings in eastern Idaho and that is why those population numbers are complete. He indicated that they are here to take their testimony and input. He encouraged her to not think we are ignoring the north, that's why the commission was here. **Commissioner Finman** then pointed out that she is from the local area and indicated that it is important to all of the commissioners that they travel to the rural areas. **Commissioner Andersen** pointed out that all of the maps submitted will be on the website and that everyone can review them and comment on them. When maps are being considered they will be on this website so all citizens of the state, including the 60,000 members of the Farm Bureau, can review them and submit comments and concerns, and they will have the same access to the maps as the commissioners do. He also encouraged her to let her Farm Bureau members know that all of these hearings are being streamed on IPTV.

Senator Joyce Broadsword from Legislative District 2 thanked the commission for their service to Idaho and its citizens. She suggested that it is about what's best for citizens in the districts. Some people have to vote by mail because it's so far to go, and she has to travel through several other districts to get to the southernmost part of her District 2. She pointed out that people want their representatives and senators close enough to reach them. She urged the commission to keep small cities together, and to use natural divisions like rivers or lakes where possible. It makes sense to add communities like Oldtown and Priest River back to District 1, and not divide them. She suggested that Highway 95 could be a good dividing line also. She stated that district size can serve people best when small enough to see to all of the constituents needs. Commissioner Moses pointed out that they are bound by one-person one-vote mandate and can't help that some of the districts are large geographically in order to comply with that principle. Commissioner Frasure pointed out that our legislative districts now have more people than the original U.S. congressional districts, which had 30,000 people back in the day.

Ms. Lori Brea, Bonner County Democratic Committee Chair, representing herself, thanked the commission for coming to northern Idaho. She also expressed her apologies to Tom Dillin for not having gotten back to him and appreciates the comments. She is glad to hear that Clark Fork will be in the same district and she explained that she would like the Priest River area to be in the same district.

Mr. Dillin then asked if he could comment on some issues. He indicated that he has some issues related to a precinct plan to put Lakeview precinct with Clark Fork and indicates that the precincts should be re done before the commission does their work. He invited everyone to attend the Bonner County Republican Central Committee meeting next Tuesday to work together on this. **Chairman Frasure** then indicated that local county clerks can re-draw precincts every year, and drawing precincts is not a redistricting issue. He suggested that **Mr. Dillin**

talk to his county clerk if he has a question about their problem precincts, and pointed out that the commission's guidelines are to not split precincts as it takes a super majority to do so. He told a story illustrating that it is not useful to depend on city lines for boundaries because in Boise the lines had changed before the ink on the plans was even dry. He also indicated that he knew they would hear about District 2 today, and indicated that they will review all of the notes from the public hearing and will see what the commission can work out. He indicated that 10 years ago the commission reviewed 97 plans and encouraged the public to submit plans, even partial, for review.

Commissioner Moses then challenged everyone to go onto the website and draw just 7 districts. He indicated that they can certainly go further, but in drawing just 7 districts they will begin to understand the complexity of this process.

Chairman Frasure then thanked Idaho Public TV for streaming the hearing, he thanked everyone in the audience for their time and indicated as there was no further testimony they would adjourn until 7:00 p.m. that evening in Coeur d 'Alene.